

## **PWQ: Feminist empiricism in the new millennium: Building on the past for the future**

By: [Jacquelyn W. White](#)

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### **Abstract:**

For the past year the new editorial board has been working quietly but in earnest to continue *The Psychology of Women's Quarterly's (PWQ)* tradition of publishing high quality feminist scholarship. I want to personally thank Nancy Felipe Russo, the outgoing editor, not only for her work on the present issue of *PWQ*, but also for all the guidance and support she has given me during the past transition year. She and the editors before her have set a standard of excellence for this journal that I and the new editorial board are committed to sustaining. Many thanks also go to Judy Worell who first invited me to join the *PWQ* team as a consulting editor. And a final thanks to Janet Hyde for her "sisterly nudges" encouraging me to submit my materials for consideration as *PWQ* editor.

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### **Article:**

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In thinking about what I wanted to say in this editorial, I went back and re-read the past editors' editorials. They contain important points that are worth revisiting as we enter the new millennium. The notion of the new millennium has created a sort of national psyche that inspires us to reflect on the past and to think about the future in grander ways than normal. It is clear to me that the contributions of feminist psychology have been and will continue to be crucial to the entire field of psychology; psychological advances in the new millennium must be informed by feminist scholarship. Judy Worell (1990) noted that the role of the *PWQ* Editorial Board is

fourfold: ‘We all serve, at one time or another, as confirmed feminists, knowledgeable historians, constructive evaluators, and visionary futurists’ (p. 1). This is as true today as it was 10 years ago. Nancy Russo (1995) argued rightly that *PWQ* is the scientific voice in feminist psychology. As feminists the new Editorial Board remains committed to the idea that “*PWQ* is a research journal with an empirical, scientific tradition that is centered in the discipline of psychology” (Russo, 1995, p. 2). We are proud to call ourselves feminists and are willing to advocate for the central importance of feminist perspectives in improving the lives of women and girls, a goal of *PWQ* from the very beginning. We will build on the past to make the hard decisions necessary to advance quality feminist research. The new associate editors bring valuable skills and knowledge to *PWQ* and provide a diverse group that is committed to not only facilitating the publication of outstanding feminist scholarship, but also nurturing our junior colleagues as researchers and reviewers.

## THE EDITORIAL BOARD’S GOALS

At the first National Conference on Education and Training in Feminist Practice at Boston College in 1993, feminist process was defined as a set of actions that can transform psychology. As described by Judy Worell and Norine Johnson (1999; see book review in this issue), these include building structure for diversity, distributing leadership and responsibility, valuing all voices, honoring personal experience, deciding through consensus, and promoting social change. These practices exemplify the way in which *PWQ*’s Editorial Board will function.

### Structure for Diversity

The editorial board and I are strongly committed to diversity in a variety of ways. We encourage research on a broad range of topics, using diverse samples and methods. I am frequently asked whether we publish articles with male participants, articles using older data sets, and articles using qualitative methods. The answer in each case is yes if the study is well-justified theoretically, reflects understanding of the existing literature, uses methods and analytic tools appropriately and properly for the questions asked, is timely and contributes to a knowledge base that can improve the lives of women and girls.

We have established an extensive and diverse group of Consulting Editors. Consulting editors are chosen on the basis of their reviewing experience and the relevance of their areas of expertise to the needs of *PWQ* researchers. Interested in getting involved? Please volunteer to become an ad hoc reviewer by sending your vita with a statement of areas of expertise to me. This will introduce you to the reviewing process.

To further our commitment to diversity, we are planning to reinstate the student editorial board that Judy Worell had. This will provide a vehicle for mentoring our feminist students in the research process, contributing to their educational development, as well as preparing them for leadership roles as their careers develop.

### Distribute Leadership and Responsibility, Value All Voices, and Decide Through Consensus

The review process is structured so that multiple opinions are shared, primarily through the use of two or three reviewers for each article. Each associate editor considers all the reviews and arrives at a recommendation to the editor that reflects the consensus of the reviewers. These decisions may range from reject, reject with encouragement to revise and resubmit, accept pending revisions, or accept. The editor then considers these recommendations, and if the recommendation is to publish, first the associate editor and then the editor work with the author to move the manuscript toward publication. Authors are also invited to correspond with the assigned associate editor as the review process takes place. Direct contact between authors and reviewers is considered inappropriate. All of APAs ethical guidelines are followed in the review process. Prospective authors are encouraged to contact me if they have questions about their manuscript and the submission process.

### Promote Social Change

The goal of *PWQ* is to promote change through knowledge. The new Editorial Board wants to go a step further. We are encouraging authors to add a brief policy implications section to the end of their manuscripts, whenever appropriate, as a means of making more concrete the relevance of feminist research for improving the lives of women.

Additionally, we are exploring ways to capitalize on advances in electronic media to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge about feminist research and to more efficiently conduct the routine business of the journal. As a start, you might want to check out Division 35's web page at <http://www.apa.org/about/division/div35.html>.

### THE DECADE OF BEHAVIOR

To celebrate the 25th year of *PWQ* and the new millennium, I have invited Nancy Russo to join me in planning a special issue for 2001, building on the themes of APAs Decade of Behavior-do we dare call it "2001: A Feminist Odyssey?" We have invited outstanding feminist scholars to contribute articles that span the Decade of Behavior themes of a healthier, safer, smarter society in the new century. These articles will argue for the centrality of feminist psychology to accomplishing these goals.

### MEET THE NEW EDITORIAL BOARD

The editor of *PWQ* needs a breadth of knowledge about various methodologies and theoretical perspectives. I hope I bring these qualities to the job. My training in social and personality psychology at Kent State University exposed me to many theoretical perspectives. Additionally, I minored in statistics and research design, and I have taught graduate level research design for years. I have an issues-oriented perspective that demands I stay on top of the latest developments. These include epistemological issues (as they relate to quantitative and qualitative designs), design issues (such as within versus between designs, moderator-mediator distinctions), and statistical issues (such as power analyses, the role of statistical hypothesis-testing). I also understand many of these issues as I encounter them in my own research on violence against women. As one of the long-time members of the Women's Studies Program at UNCG and its director for three years, I know first hand what it means to work with individuals who have

diverse perspectives and different languages. I have called upon my colleagues in Women's Studies many times for sources of information in their fields that help inform my work. I truly enjoy interacting with, and learning from, feminists with different perspectives. I served as an associate editor for *PWQ* under both Judy Worell and Nancy Russo. My experiences with them have shown me the power the editor and her board have in shaping the face of feminist research in psychology. It was exciting, rewarding, and an honor to be part of their teams. I am looking forward to continuing the collaborative team approach with the new board.

#### New Board Members

**Antonia Abbey**, Ph.D. in social psychology from Northwestern University, is currently in the Department of Community Medicine at Wayne State University. Her research focuses on psychosocial aspects of health: in particular, sexual assault etiology and prevention and the role of alcohol and misperception of sexual cues in sexual assault. A second research area concerns how couples cope with infertility. She has published more than 35 articles and has been a Consulting Editor to *PWQ* since 1989.

**Linda J. Beckman**, Ph.D. in social psychology from the University of California-Los Angeles, is currently at the California School of Professional Psychology in Los Angeles and is an Associate at the Pacific Institute for Women's Health. Her work has focused on two main areas: substance abuse in women and women's reproductive health. She has recently co-edited a book for the Division 35 Book Series entitled *The New Civil War: The Psychology, Culture and Politics of Abortion*. She currently is studying the characteristics of heterosexual couple relationships, gender roles, power and communication among Latinos, and the application of this knowledge to the development and evaluation of couple-based interventions.

**Jeanette Norris**, Ph.D. in social psychology from University of Washington, is a research scientist at the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute at the University of Washington. She has studied many aspects of violence against women for more than 20 years, including the psychological impact of rape, factors that predict rape reporting to the authorities, the relationship between alcohol consumption and acquaintance rape, perceptions of rape victims, the cognitive mediation of women's responses to sexual aggression by an acquaintance, as well as the relationship between drug abuse and domestic violence and the relationship between alcohol consumption and responses to violent pornography.

**Jape E. Stake**, Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Arizona State University, is a professor of psychology, director of the Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology, and a member of the board of the Institute of Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Her research interests include gender issues in self-concept and achievement, the link between gender roles and wellbeing, interventions for the empowerment of women, and sexual ethics in psychotherapy. She is currently investigating the effects of feminist pedagogy and course content on student attitudes and activist behaviors in a national study of 32 women's studies programs (see Stake & Hoffmann, 2000).

**Kim Marie Vaz**, Ph.D. in educational psychology from Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, is an associate professor of Women's Studies at the University of South Florida. She has

carried out research in Africa and has published books on African and African American women. She is editor of *Oral Narrative Research with Black Women: Collecting Treasures* (1997) and *Black Women in America: Confronting Gender, Race and Class* (1995), both from Sage Publications. She has received awards for her research in the area of women and psychology such as the 1996 Women of Color Psychologies Award from the Association for Women in Psychology for her paper entitled "Racial Aliteracy: White Appropriation of Black Presences." Currently, she is conducting a qualitative study exploring the contemporary psychosocial issues facing women of African descent from the perspective of the unconscious.

**Alexis J. Walker**, Ph.D. in human development and family studies from Penn State in 1979, holds the Jo Anne Leonard Petersen Chair in Gerontology and Family Studies at Oregon State University, where she is Professor of Human Development and Family Sciences. She brings both developmental and social psychological perspectives to her research on gender and family relationships. Although her major focus is on middle-aged women and their aging mothers, she has published on family care-giving, the division of household labor, gender and power in close relationships, feminist pedagogy, and the place of feminism in the study of families. Her current work is a qualitative study situating women's intergenerational ties within the context of the gendered family labor of care-giving, nurturing, and domestic work.

**Book Review Editor: Arnold (Arnie) Kahn**, Ph.D., is professor of psychology and women's studies at James Madison University. He conducts research on rape acknowledgment, men's perceptions of sex, violence, and romance, and gender in the workplace. He has published widely. Arnie served Division 35 as secretary-treasurer (1977-1980), associate editor of *PWQ* (1981-1986), a member of the Carolyn Sherif Award Committee (1983-1985), and co-Editor with Jan Yoder of the *PWQ* special issue on Women and Power. He is currently a member of the Hyde Graduate Student Research Award Committee. Also, he was the co-recipient of the division's 1994 Heritage Award for Research on Women and Gender and is the 1998-1999 Madison Scholar of James Madison University's College of Education and Psychology.

**Editorial Assistant: Jennifer Murrow** is a business major at University of North Carolina at Greensboro with wonderful computer skills, including web page construction and management.

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